

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 8013

By Smith

A RESOLUTION to honor the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, College of Nursing on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary.

WHEREAS, we take great pride in recognizing those outstanding institutions of higher education that, through the dedicated efforts of their students, faculty, and staff, bring honor to the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, College of Nursing is one such estimable institution that is celebrating fifty years of excellent teaching, quality learning experiences, and community involvement; and

WHEREAS, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, College of Nursing was opened in 1971 after the General Assembly determined a need for a public nursing college in East Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Sylvia Hart, the esteemed associate dean for undergraduate nursing programs at the State University of New York, was recruited to become the first dean of the College of Nursing and served twenty-one years in that position; and

WHEREAS, during Dean Hart's tenure, the school established a strong foundation and launched its bachelor's, master's and doctorate programs and saw its nursing doctoral students cross disciplinary lines to collaborate with colleagues across the campus, conducting life-changing nursing science research; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of the next dean, Joan Creasia, the College of Nursing sought to address the persistent shortage of skilled nurses and obtained additional funding to add several programs, including the Doctor of Nursing Practice and the RN to BSN program, and worked diligently to equip and prepare as many nurses as possible for the workforce; and

WHEREAS, the current dean, Victoria Niederhauser, who was appointed in 2011, has continued to address the nursing gap by growing enrollment from 420 undergraduates and 129 graduate students to 760 undergraduates and 183 graduate students while also increasing the number of faculty members from 53 to 113; and

WHEREAS, Dean Niederhauser has also focused on experiential simulation learning, including the Health Innovation and Technology Lab and nursing science research, which has enriched the work of the college's students and faculty by providing real-life learning opportunities; and

WHEREAS, working to create a supportive environment for research and scholarly activity, the College of Nursing has attracted \$2.9 million in extramural funding during fiscal year 2021 and now boasts a record eight faculty members who are American Academy of Nursing fellows and seven others with national academy appointments; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Nursing Practice was opened in 2015 to address the lack of access to nursing care throughout the State; the self-funded center supports the growth of nurse-managed clinics, community outreach, collaboration, and education of healthcare professionals and nurse leaders in Tennessee and beyond; and

WHEREAS, graduates of the College of Nursing have a 98.5 percent pass rate on the National Council Licensure Exam, the highest in a decade and far surpassing the State and national average; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, undergraduate nursing students conducted about 17,000 hours of service in the community; in 2021, students and faculty have given more than 26,000 vaccines on campus and in various healthcare and community settings as well as provided saliva testing and contact tracing for students on campus, screened employees, and worked additional hours in hospitals needing coverage; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, Dean Niederhauser will oversee the realization of a new nursing building, a \$60 million facility, to expand the college in order to educate more nurses, cultivate more collaboration, and conduct more life-changing research; and

WHEREAS, it is most appropriate that we specially recognize and applaud such an exceptional institution on this historic occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, College of Nursing on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary and extend our deepest appreciation to the students, faculty, and staff for their laudable contributions to the nursing profession.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.